PREFACE

As a student of sociology in the professional career of about two decades in teaching sociology, population, social problems and rural development to the academics of sociology provided me an insight into many potential fields in sociology. Particularly, Medical/Health sociology that still need to be harnessed and understood, and the geographical area where I am working is also under the grip of its own peculiar health problems i.e. endemic fluorosis, which substandard the health condition of the masses. This situation ultimately led me to take up this study on rural community based health problems considering the importance of and ignorance about it. The field observation experiences in the rural health and medical care systems prepared me to understand the rural health beliefs and practices, and their perceptions about health, disease, treatment, personal hygiene and habits, environmental sanitations and differential utilization, patterns of health services in rural setting.

The present study therefore, may be considered as an attempt to understand the interrelationships of geo-socio-cultural, economic and educational factors affecting the health status of the people of different sections of community is significant area of exploration. Thus, such a type of investigation will not only highlight the health problems of a community but also provide good insight into the study of rural health culture.

The data were collected during December 2000 to March 2001 in village Kalkeri, situated in Mundargi Taluka in erstwhile Dharwad District in Karnataka. The methods of interview schedule, observations and statistical methods have been used to collect the data related with health, disease, personal hygiene and habits, dietary practices, maternal and child health care and utilization of health service in rural community.

Above all, it was my good fortune that my teacher but also friend, philosopher and guide, Dr. C.A. Somashekharappa readily agreed to take me as a doctoral student without, which I could not have even dream of securing Ph.D in Medical/Health Sociology, which I cherished ever since I joined the department as a doctoral student.

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